

## [Arthur A. Carleton]

1

Form A Vermont 1938-9

Vermont

(Mrs.) Rebecca M. Halley

West Newbury, Vermont

Sept. 20, 23, 1938

Folklore

1. Afternoon of both days.

2. Maple Grove Farm.

6. Huge white house surrounded by maple trees, with a piazza on two sides, sits on the rise of land just above West Newbury. It was, at the time William and Dudley Carleton were alive (grandfather and father of present Arthur A.), about the most productive and fertile farm in the whole town. It overlooks the White Mountain range and the Connecticut River valley and is skirted in the immediate foreground with level meadows and the famous 3,500 maple bush, which, incidentally, was laid waste by the hurricane of Sept. 21, 1938.

The interior of the house is made dark by the trees, the piazza, and the old-fashioned finish of dark wood and papers. There are any number of mementoes of past glory and a bookcase filled with old editions, some of which are doubtless very valuable. Mr. Carleton owns a complete edition of Will Carleton's homespun poems, also wood-covered reading

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book which was his grandfather's and an edition of Rev. Grant Powers' "History of Coos County" published in 1811. There in a scrapbook giving much of the Carleton and West Newbury history, original poems, 2 etc. Mrs. Carleton hospitably served a huge piece of pumpkin pie made with maple sugar and we visited long and furiously about the days gone by.

The house was built in 1891 by the aforesaid William and Dudley Carleton on the site of the building which was for nearly thirty years the Town Farm of Newbury. During that period (1837-1866) the farm served as refuge for the town idiots and mentally deficient as well as the poor, for there were no insane Institutions then. Many of Mr. Carleton's stories were based on the adventures and misadventures of these unfortunates. He was a small boy at the time they moved to the farm and the incidents, as told by his elders, made an indelible impression on his mind. Many of them through their nature cannot be repeated here, I have culled the best and least offensive. 1 Form B Vermont [1938-9?]

1. English - from the Carleton's of Carleton Hall, Corinth, Cumberland County, England. First Carleton's came to America in 1639 and settled in Rowley, Mass.

2. West Newbury, Oct. 26, 1873.

3. Mrs. Sadie Carleton, Marion Carleton, Lowell, Mass. Harold Carleton, West Newbury.

4. Always lived in West Newbury on the farm which has been in the family for three generations.

5. Grade school in West Newbury.

6. President of the Vermont Maple Sugar Growers' Association from 1912-1919.

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7. Very clever about arranging flowers for special occasions and arrangements of maple sugar for exhibits. Won numerous prizes with latter at Maple Sugar Conventions before and after he was president. He did not exhibit while he was in office.

8. He has always been active in community affairs following in the steps of father and grandfather.

9. A. A. Carleton is a little taller than average when he stands straight, however, he is stooped some from illness and age. He has removed the greyed edition of the moustache which made his pictures so ravishing in the papers when he was front and foremost in the development of the maple sugar industry in Vermont. His hair is almost white. He usually wears an old grey shirt and khaki pants around the farm and sticks to old-fashioned "galluses" for support. He chews tobacco, and evidences 2 of it decorate the corners of his mouth. He is kindly and lives in the glories of his ancestors, enjoying nothing more than a good visit about the times that are gone. He loves above all things to shock people and will tell uncensored tales of events and people of this village in an effort to get a "rise" out of one.

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Vermont Mrs. Rebecca U. Halley

West Newbury, Vermont

### TALL STORIES

From Informant A. A. Carleton

(See Form B. Sheet 1)

"Now I can't vouch for this story. 'Twas told to me way back when I was a little shaver. I won't say as to whether it was true or not because I wasn't there. It all happened, long 'fore

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I was born. My Gransir, now, lived on a farm down on the little Ox Box. There were nice fertile fields down there along the river same as there are now. One fall, Gransir turned his pigs out on the little Bow same as usual. There was one big old sow about ready to farrow. She got lost and didn't come up to eat with the others and you may know there is something far wrong when a pig won't come to dinner. Well, sir, my Grandsir and a couple others long about dark went huntin' that sow. They traveled all over the little Ox Bow. Finally they went down toward the bank of the river. It's forty-fifty feet wide there. On the bank was a punkin' vine, a goranmighty big one, leaves like umbrellas. Out from the vine was growing stalks, big ones, and two of them stalks had grown together. You know, the way molasses candy looks when you pull it, flat this way. Well, the old sow's tracks went right up to that vine and disappeared, just vanished into thin air. That vine stretched out right across the river. Clear over to the New Hampshire side. Warn't no other place the old sow could 2 have gone, so Grandsir knew she must have crossed the river on the punkin' vine. Wait now, that warn't all of it. The men got a canoe and crossed the river. That was way before the bridges were built. On the other side they follered up the bank. They went along and there in a little while they come to the place where the vine had hit the bank. They went along by it and there were the sow's tracks. Way back a bit they come across a big punkin', the biggest one they ever saw. Around the other side was a little hole about so big. they peeked in and there was the old sow sleepin' sound with a whole litter of little pigs cuddled up to her. Shows the inginuity of the species and the fertility of the river valley."

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"Way back in the times when this village was first settled everybody kept pigs. They let 'em run loose in a big herd. Early in the fall they'd get 'em all together and turn 'um aout up on the side of Moore Mountain. They'd make a big pen and keep 'em in it a few days and nights to gen 'em used to it. Then they'd let 'em go to fatten up on acorns and berries and things.

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"Well, there was an old boar at the head of the outfit. He was big boss of the whole gang. He must have weighed six-seven hundred and he had tusks as long as this. He would lead that whole herd round through the woods and keep 'em mindin' their P's and Q's

"Late one afternoon some of the young folks was up in the upper end of the village foolin' round the way young folks will do and they heard a commotion up near the pig lot. They looked around and there was that old boar a roundin' up about forty of the old sows and young stuff and shovin' 'em into the hog lot. He was ripped in a dozen places and losin' blood fast, but when he got 'em all in he told 'em to stay there if they valued their hides and then he put up over the hill a kitin'.

"The young ones rushed back to the village and told what they had seen and a bunch of men got their rifles. They back tracked the boar clear up over the top of the mountain and just down the other side they come onto a big bear all laid out with his insides ripped open and deader'n a door nail.

"Well, sir, they kept on and pretty soon they come onto another bear treated just the same. They left that one and followed the boar's tracks a couple miles further to the edge of the pond. There was a tremenjous commotion going on down there and they hurried on as fast as they could. 'Twas beginning to fall dark and they couldn't do so good in the thick woods. When they got out onto the edge of the pond there in a clearin' was the old boar and he was layin' off round and round in the middle of a ring of three bears. He'd gored 'em some, but they was closing up on him fast. Two riffles barked and two bears died and just as they drew on the third bear, he brought his paw smack down on the boar's back. Then they got him, too. Well, sir, there was the old boar and five bears way off in the woods scattered from there to the village. One man built a fire and stayed with the boar that night. The critter's hind quarters was paralysed from the whack the bear 4 gave him and he couldn't walk and he was too heavy to pack. So the other two went back to the village. In the mornin' they hitched a couple pair of oxen to a drag and cut a road through to the pond. They piled the old boar and the five bears onto the drag and took them back

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to the village. All the villagers had bear meat to eat that winter and there was several nice bear-skin rugs made out of them as weren't damaged much.

“Oh, the boar?” Well sir, he wa'n't much damaged except he couldn't walk no more. They kept him in ease and comfort until his tusks fell out and he died of old age.